



PRESS RELEASE

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“ANIMALS IN ART” EXHIBITION OPENS AT ART CENTER

Exhibit features work from permanent collection, along with works from other artists

MUSCATINE, Iowa - Man's best friend, barnyard creatures, playful kittens, circus animals, and bucking broncos are among the animals portrayed in the Animals in Art exhibition that is currently on view at the Muscatine Art Center.

The exhibition combines paintings, prints, drawings, and sculptures from the Art Center's Latta. Featured are works by John Steuart Curry, Thomas Hart Benton, Marc Chagall, Pablo Picasso, Virginia Myers, Nathaniel Currier, and many others including Muscatine artist William Bunn.

“This exhibition brings together treasures from the permanent collection with over 150 pieces of American Art Pottery,” Melanie Alexander, Director of the Muscatine Art Center, said. “Planning this exhibition has been a real joy. It is not often that we have the opportunity to display a



Works of art featuring horses are displayed on the middle floor of the Stanley Gallery while an array of American Art Pottery depicts pets and farm animals.



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charcoal and pastel by Edgar Degas next to lithographs by Grant Wood."



Charcoal and pastel drawing by Edgar Degas displayed next to two lithographs by Grant Wood.

Among the artwork displayed on the Stanley Gallery's walls are paintings that were added as recently as November 2023, works on paper that were framed especially for this exhibition and had not previously been on view, and paintings that were cleaned or restored in 2023.

"Even our frequent visitors will encounter works of art never before displayed at the Muscatine Art Center," Alexander said.

The display of American Art Pottery is the second major exhibition in the Stanley Gallery to feature the Latta collection. In 2006, approximately 100 pieces were on view for "Weller Pottery: The Rare, The Unusual, The Seldom Seen." While that exhibition spotlighted the work of a single pottery company, "Animals in Art" celebrates the creations of three main pottery studios – Rookwood, Roseville, and Weller – along with examples of works by more contemporary potters.

"Muscatine Art Center staff selected examples of larger garden ware, vases, other vessels, and smaller objects," Alexander said.

"Each person on staff has a few favorites like the garden ware swans that measure about 18 inches or the highly decorative vases that feature fish or owls. There is something for everyone among the examples of art pottery."

Collectors Mark and Marie Latta have collected American Art Pottery for decades, and the couple have served on the board of



Painting by Muscatine artist William Bunn depicts the Mississippi River from Wyoming Hill



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the American Art Pottery Association. Mark is the past president of the organization and is the current president of the Board of Trustees for the Muscatine Art Center. The couple has lent their collection to museums in the Midwest such as the Brunnier Art Museum on the Iowa State University campus and the Zanesville Museum of Art.



Garden ware swans

The couple will give a guided tour of their collection on view in "Animals in Art" at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, February 29 in the Stanley Gallery. Admission is by donation, and reservations are not required.

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The Muscatine Art Center is located at 1314 Mulberry Avenue in Muscatine, Iowa. Hours are Tuesday through Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Thursday evenings until 7:00 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. Admission is free. Donations are appreciated. Visit www.muscatineartcenter.org for more information about programs, events, and exhibitions.